

Unto His Grace, the Marques of Tweeddale, His MAJESTIES High Commissioner, and the Remenant Honourable Estates of Parliament.

## The SUPPLICATION of

The Brewers in Edinburgh, Leith and Suburbs  
of the samen, and Sheriffdom of Mid-Lothian

Humbly sheweth,

**T**HAT there being by the late Act of Parliament an Additional Imposition of three *pennies Scots*, Imposed upon each Pynt of Ale and Beer brown and vented within the Kingdom, and two *shilling Scots* upon each Pynt of strong Waters, by and attour two Merks of each Boll of Malt formerly payable to his Majrsty, and two *pennies* upon each Pynt of Ale, payable to the Town of Edinburgh, and which Imposition was appointed to endure and continue until the first of May 1695 Years; Albeit your Petitioners were at that time very sensible that the foresaid additional Imposition would be very grievous and heavy upon them, yet being very confident that his Sacred Majrsty, and the Honourable Estates of Parliament would not allow the same to be continued upon them, beyond the time prescribed by the foresaid A&: We did, with all duty and submission hitherto, and during that time, make punctual payment of the same, albeit thereby several Brewers have been utterly ruined and broken, and many others of us in hazard of falling under the same Misfortune, by the great prejudice we have sustained by the said additional Imposition this twenty three moneths bypast; And as we do humbly and confidently expect to be liberat from the like Imposition for the future, so we do humbly beg leave to represent to your Grace, and the Honourable Estates of Parliament these following Grounds, for clearing what great Prejudice we have already sustained thereby: And convincing your Grace, and the High and Honourable Court of Parliament, that it is simply impossible for us to undergo such an heavy and untollerable burden for the future, without inevitable Ruine to our selves and Families, in case we should continue to exercise our Trade and Employment of brewing as formerly. The Barley Beer having been for some years bygone, and presently being sold at or about ten *merks*, and the Impositions payed by the Brewers thir twenty three Moneths bypast, amounting to six *merks*: each boll of Barley Beer stands sixteen *merks*, besides which there is to be added, House, Barn, Kill and Brewhouse-rent, the

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expenses of Coal and Candle, mantaining of Horses, Slaids and other Neces-  
sars, and the great Charge of many Servants, brewing Looms &c. who are  
absolutely necessarie for carying on an Brewarie. The Multure payed for  
Malt, besides a great many inconveniencies which attend the grinding of Malt,  
and the having of many Servants; So that it may be truly said, that every  
Boll of Malt costs eighteen *merks* or thereby: And yet all that can be drawn  
or got of sufficient two shilling Ale, such as the Retailers or Vintners will  
take of their hand (considering the greatness of the Measure the Ventners do  
receive) is at most sixteen Gallons of each Boll, the pryce whereof no Brewer  
can accompt more than sixteen *shillings 8 p. d.* considering that we give allow-  
ance of a Barrel to the score, and of Drink-money, and all this is over and  
above the great hazard of insolvent Debtors, and at the best of long out-ly-  
ing of our Money, and of spoiled and returned Ale, which very often falls out,  
especially in hot weather, even without any fault of the Brewers, either by  
reason of Thunder, or the malice and evil will of the Tapster.

*Secundo,* We humbly crave Liberty to mynd your Grace and Lordships,  
that as the foresaid Imposition has been most prejudicial to your Petitioners,  
so likewise to all Heritors, and such who sold Beer: For this must needs follow,  
that the Nobility and Gentry and others who uses to sell Beer cannot expect such  
a pryce as we would be encouraged to give for Beer, in case we were free of the  
foresaid Imposition, for such Brewers as shal think fit to continue will in buying of  
Beer have some regard to, and consideration of their own Advantage, as far as pos-  
sible, and of the preventing their own ruine. And further, if the Brewers,  
who are the Chief, if not the only Buyers do break (as by what is above repre-  
sented, it is clear they must) then the Nobility and Gentry cannot expect good  
payment, but must suffer loss with them.

*Tertio,* As it is the interest of the Heritors upon the foresaid accompt, That  
the foresaid Imposition be not Renewed, so likewise upon the following, viz.  
That thereby there will be less consumption of Beer, for such Brewers who  
shal think fit to continue must needs make their Ale smaller.

*Quarto,* We humbly crave Liberty to represent, that it seems very hard that  
We or the Beer should be the great Fond of all Impositions, and that others and  
other Commodities less favourable, and more able than Beer go free, seing it  
is conceived that as all persons do share proportionally in his Majesties bounty  
and benign Government, So likewise should they bear a proportional part of  
the burden; Whereas, as said is, there are a great many Fonds, and Persons  
much richer than your Petitioners, who have gone free this while by past, and  
if other Fonds and Persons be stmented proportionally, to what your Peti-  
tioners and the Beer is, there might be a very considerable Supply granted  
to his Majestie.

*Quinto.* Your Petitioners humbly crave Liberty to represent, that it like-  
wise would prove very prejudicial to His Majesty to continue the said Imposi-  
tion, seing, as said is the Brewers will thereby inevitably be ruined, or give  
over their brewing, 'in either of which cases the Supply intended to be gran-  
ted to His Majesty will not prove effectual: for if they break, as bygone ex-  
perience has demonstrat, they daily do, they will brake with part to the King,  
and if they forbear, then the Excise will not amount to what is expected.

*Sexto,* Seing that many of us have at great Charge erected Stells for making  
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of Waters of our Dregg, and spoiled and returned Ale, for lessening our Losses in some measure, and that we have payed for our Dregg and spoiled and returned Ale, three Impositions, it seemed very hard that we should have been obliged to pay for any Water made of our Dregg or returned Ale, seing thereby we were made lyable for a fourth Imposition altogether intollerable, and it is hoped that it was not the meaning of the Parliament that any such thing should have been formerly exacted, far less ought to be continued.

And lest it should be objected against us, that Experience has taught that the foresaid Imposition has proven a good and effectual Fond and Method for raising of Money, the same having been very readily and pleasantly payed, and that the Brewers do continue in alse good case as ever, and the Ale as strong as formerly, and that the Heritors were never sensible of any difference of the prycce of Bear, by reason of the foresaid Imposition, and that the Brewers may if they please, raise the price of their Ale, or that the foresaid Imposition may be imposed upon the Retailers with advantage, both to the King and Brewers. We humbly crave Liberty to Represent; That (as said is) sad Experience proves that the foresaid Imposition has not only obliged several Brewers to quite their Employments, but even occasioned their ruine & braking: And albeit some whose Stock or Credit was more considerable, did continue to brew, by reason of the severity of the Certification in case they left off, and that being surprised with such an Act, they had more than a years fore-hand Beer on their Hand, for which their Credit stood ingaged, so that they were necessitat to Brew at any rate for keeping their Credit, and that they believed that the foresaid Imposition would be no older than twenty three Months, yet by what is before represented, it's hoped it is to a Demonstration clear, that all alongst during the Existance of that Imposition we did brew with a Loss, and if it continue, we must all either Ruine or leave off our Imployment, to the prejudice both of His Majesty and the Nobility and Gentry, &c. And however, the great Export of Beer which was the former year, might have occasioned the keeping up of the Price of Beer, yet the Experiencie of many this year, and Reason may teach any thinking Person, that in case of any subsequent plentiful Year, the Heretors must suffer an great Abatement as to the Price of the Beer, or otherwise be obliged to keep the same upon their own hands, to their great loss and detriment; Neither has it hitherto been possible for the Brewers, (notwithstanding of an express Act of Council in their favours, of the date the 7th of September 1693, allowing them to highten the Price of Ale,) to get any greater price for their Ale than what they got formerly, notwithstanding of great Endeavours used by them for making the said Act effectual, and that by reason Ale is a very perishing Commodity, and that there are too many different Brewers in different Circumstances, and that our Countrey People are very poor, and that the Work-men and poorest of the People, and not the Gentry, are these who make the greatest Consumption of Ale, and albeit some have brewed als good Ale as formerly, yet that was occasioned by the Retailers their refusing to retail any smaller Ale, and that the Ale as said is, is a perishing Commodity, admitting of no delay in retailing, and that they expected the foresaid Imposition would be but of small endurance, and therefore brewed upon their own Stocks with loss, in hopes that after elapsing of the twenty three Months they would be free, and that as said is, the Brewers were obliged to dispatch the Victuall they had in their hands at any Rate, for keeping their Credit; And if the Imposition should be laid upon the Ventners and Retail-

ers, it would neither prove profitable to His Majesty, nor easie to the Brewers, but will have the quite contrair Effect: For if the Brewers should be thereby ruined, then it cannot be but acknowledged that His Majesty will be a Loser, seing if the Brewing be the Fond of the Imposition, and the Brewers break, the Imposition must fail in consequence, and that the Brewers will be ruined thereby, is clear from this, that the sume laid upon the Retailers, will affect the Brewers, seing the Ventners and the Retailers will buy Ale with respect to the said Imposition, in the same manner as the Brewers do buy from the Heretors, besides that the Methods for making that way effectual, would be such as would altogether ruine Brewers, considering that as said is, Ale is a perishing Commodity, and cannot admit of any delay, especially in *Summer weather*, and seing that it is hoped, that by what is before and above represented, it is clear, that your Petitioners standing and falling depends upon the continuing or not continuing of the said Imposition, and that we have been already at a very considerable Loss. And that as the Land-rent is al- ready lyable to the payment of the greatest part of all publick Burdens and Impositions, and the great Impositions upon Beer and Malt, being an unanswerable Reason for lessning the Price of the Beer, the same is by Consequence an additional Imposition upon the Land-rent; and so the Heretors and your Petitioners, are in a manner the Chief, if not only the persons burdened hitherto with the payment of Supplies: And which clears a greater inequality, these Heretors whose Rents are payable in Beer, and Barley do bear the great Burden of this additional Imposition, whereas other Heretors whose Rents are payable in Meal or Money, are lyable alenarly to an ordinary Proportion referring to the Land-rent, and to no part of the Impositions imposed upon Beer or Barley, which lyesso heavy upon other Heretors.

It is humbly craved, your Grace and Lordships would be pleased to take the Premisses and your Petitioners Case to your Consideration, and would be pleased to lay such Supplies as shall be found necessar to be granted to His Majesty for carrying on the War, in which he is so justly engaged, upon other Fonds which are more able to bear them than Beer, and to fall upon some Method for making up your Petitioners Loss sustained by the Brewing this 23 Moneths bypast, and to free us from any such Additional Impositions for the future,